

**District of Columbia Public Schools**  
**2009 Summer Reading List for Rising 7th Grade Students**

<b>Author</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Synopsis</b>
<b>Adoff, Arnold</b>	<b>I Am the Darker Brother</b>	Eric Wilson, a young black man and a student at Capwell University. During his senior year, he is involved in a discussion about race which forces him to analyze his own prejudices and re-evaluate his relationship with his bi-racial girlfriend, Kara, and his friend, Don, the first and only white brother ever to be admitted to Capwell's chapter of Beta Phi Beta.
<b>Anderson, Laurie H.</b>	<b>Chains</b>	As the Revolutionary War begins, thirteen-year-old Isabel wages her own fight...for freedom. Promised freedom upon the death of their owner, she and her sister, Ruth, in a cruel twist of fate become the property of a malicious New York City couple, the Locktons, who have no sympathy for the American Revolution and even less for Ruth and Isabel.
<b>Armstrong, Jennifer</b>	<b>Shipwreck at the Bottom of the World</b>	The events of the 1914 Shackleton Antarctic expedition when after being trapped in a frozen sea for nine months, their ship, Endurance, was finally crushed, forcing Shackleton and his men to make a very long and perilous journey across ice and stormy seas to reach inhabited land.
<b>Bauer, Joan</b>	<b>Rules of the Road</b>	Sixteen-year-old Jenna gets a job driving the elderly owner of a chain of successful shoe stores from Chicago to Texas to confront the son who is trying to force her to retire, and along the way Jenna hones her talents as a saleswoman and finds the strength to face her alcoholic father.
<b>Bruchac, Joseph</b>	<b>Bowman's Store: A Journey to Myself</b>	"Sonny" Bruchac lived with his grandparents in the Adirondack foothills of upstate New York. Each chapter begins with a First Peoples' story that illuminates what is to come.
<b>Cooper, Susan</b>	<b>The Dark Is Rising</b>	On his eleventh birthday Will Stanton discovers that he is the last of the Old Ones, destined to seek the six magical Signs that will enable the Old Ones to triumph over the evil forces of the Dark.
<b>Cormier, Robert</b>	<b>I Am the Cheese</b>	A young boy desperately tries to unlock his past yet knows he must hide those memories if he is to remain alive.
<b>Farmer, Nancy</b>	<b>A Girl Named Disaster</b>	While journeying to Zimbabwe, eleven-year-old Nhamo struggles to escape drowning and starvation and in so doing comes close to the luminous world of the African spirits.
<b>Fleischman, John</b>	<b>Phineas Gage</b>	The true story of Phineas Gage, whose brain had been pierced by an iron rod in 1848, and who survived and became a case study in how the brain functions.
<b>Fleischman, Paul</b>	<b>Seedfolks</b>	One by one, a number of people of varying ages and backgrounds transform a trash-filled, inner-city lot into a productive and beautiful garden, and, in doing so, the gardeners are themselves transformed.
<b>Fleischman, Sid</b>	<b>Escape!: The Story of the Great Houdini</b>	A biography of the magician, ghost chaser, aviator, and king of escape artists whose amazing feats are remembered long after his death in 1926.

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<b>Freedman, Russell</b>	<b>Eleanor Roosevelt: A Life of Discovery</b>	Barbara Caruso narrates Eleanor Roosevelt's transformation from shy and gawky young girl to internationally known world traveler and major political force.
<b>Green, Roger L.</b>	<b>Tales of the Greek Heroes</b>	A retell of nineteen heroic Greek myths, including the stories of Prometheus, Heracles, Theseus, Hermes and Apollo, the first fall of Troy, and the battle of the Giants.
<b>Haddix, Margaret P.</b>	<b>Running Out of Time</b>	When a diphtheria epidemic hits her 1840 village, thirteen-year-old Jessie discovers it is actually a 1995 tourist site under unseen observation by heartless scientists, and it's up to Jessie to escape the village and save the lives of the dying children.
<b>Hautzig, Esther</b>	<b>The Endless Steppe</b>	During World War II, when she was eleven years old, the author and her family were arrested in Poland by the Russians as political enemies and exiled to Siberia. She recounts here the trials of the following five years spent on the harsh Asian steppe.
<b>Holm, Jennifer</b>	<b>Penny from Heaven</b>	As she turns twelve during the summer of 1953, Penny gains new insights into herself and her family while also learning a secret about her father's death.
<b>Howe, James</b>	<b>Totally Joe</b>	As a school assignment, a thirteen-year-old boy writes an alpha-biography life from A to Z, and explores issues of friendship, family, school, and the challenges of being a gay teenager.
<b>Hughes, Langston</b>	<b>The Dream Keeper and Other Poems</b>	A collection of sixty-six poems, selected by the author for young readers, including lyrical poems, songs, and blues, many exploring the black experience.
<b>Hunter, Latoya</b>	<b>The Diary of Latoya Hunter</b>	The diary of twelve-year-old Latoya Hunter as she goes through her first year of junior high in the Bronx.
<b>Janeczko, Paul B.</b>	<b>Top Secret: A Handbook of Codes, Ciphers...</b>	A guide to codemaking, codebreaking, and their role in history, describing different types of codes and ciphers, discussing codebreaking and concealment techniques.
<b>Jiang, Ji-li</b>	<b>Red Scarf Girl</b>	The author tells about the happy life she led in China up until she was twelve-years-old when her family became a target of the Cultural Revolution, and discusses the choice she had to make between denouncing her father and breaking with her family, or refusing to speak against him and losing her future in the Communist Party.
<b>Joseph, Lynn</b>	<b>The Color of My Words</b>	When life gets difficult for Ana Rosa, a twelve-year-old would-be writer living in a small village in the Dominican Republic, she can depend on her older brother to make her feel better--until the life-changing events on her thirteenth birthday.

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<b>Kuhn, Betsy</b>	<b>Angels of Mercy: The Army Nurses of World War II</b>	A compelling account of the army nurses of WWII.
<b>Larson, Kirby</b>	<b>Hattie Big Sky</b>	Sixteen-year-old Hattie Brooks inherits her uncle's homesteading claim in Montana in 1917 and encounters some unexpected problems related to the war in Europe.
<b>Lekuton, Joseph L.</b>	<b>Facing the Lion: Growing Up Maasai...</b>	A member of the Masai people describes his life as he grew up in a northern Kenya village, traveled to America to attend college, and became an elementary school teacher in Virginia.
<b>Lord, Cynthia</b>	<b>Rules</b>	With an autistic brother, twelve-year-old Catherine longs for a normal existence but her world is further complicated by a friendship with an young paraplegic.
<b>Lupica, Mike</b>	<b>Travel Team</b>	After he is cut from his travel basketball team--the very same team that his father once led to national prominence--twelve-year-old Danny Walker forms his own team of cast-offs that might have a shot at victory.
<b>Lyga, Barry</b>	<b>Hero-Type</b>	Lyga's latest novel, set in the same high school as his other novels, deals with heroism and investigates its nebulous relationship with patriotism.
<b>Murphy, Jim</b>	<b>The Great Fire</b>	Photographs and text, along with personal accounts of actual survivors tell the story of the great fire of 1871 in Chicago.
<b>Naidoo, Beverley</b>	<b>Journey to Jo'burg: A South African Story</b>	Children separated from their mother by the difficult conditions for blacks in South Africa, Naledi and her younger brother travel over 300 kilometers to find her in Johannesburg.
<b>Napoli, Donna Jo</b>	<b>Zel</b>	Based on the fairy tale Rapunzel, the story is told in alternating chapters from the point of view of Zel, her mother, and the nobleman who pursues her.
<b>Nelson, Kadir</b>	<b>We Are the Ship: The Story of Negro League Baseball</b>	An exploration of the history of Negro League baseball teams, discussing owners, players, hardships, wins, and losses.
<b>Nye, Naomi Shihab</b>	<b>Habibi</b>	When fourteen-year-old Liyanne Abboud, her younger brother, and her parents move from St. Louis to a new home between Jerusalem and the Palestinian village where her father was born, they face many changes and must deal with the tensions between Jews and Palestinians.
<b>O'Dell, Scott</b>	<b>Thunder Rolling in the Mountains</b>	In the late nineteenth century, a young Nez Percé girl relates how her people were driven off their land by the U.S. Army and forced to retreat north until their eventual surrender.
<b>Parks, Rosa</b>	<b>Rosa Parks: My Story</b>	Rosa Park's life story reveals the deliberate choices she made that earned her the title "Mother to a Movement."

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<b>Philbrick, Rodman</b>	<b>The Last Book in the Universe</b>	After an earthquake has destroyed much of the planet, an epileptic teenager nicknamed Spaz begins the heroic fight to bring human intelligence back to the Earth of a distant future.
<b>Pullman, Philip</b>	<b>The Golden Compass</b>	Accompanied by her daemon, Lyra Belacqua sets out to prevent her best friend and other kidnapped children from becoming the subject of gruesome experiments in the Far North.
<b>Robinet, Harriette</b>	<b>Walking to the Bus-Rider Blues</b>	Twelve-year-old Alfa Merryfield, his older sister, and their grandmother struggle for rent money, food, and their dignity as they participate in the Montgomery, Alabama bus boycott in the summer of 1956.
<b>Ryan, Pamela Munoz</b>	<b>Esperanza Rising</b>	Esperanza and her mother are forced to leave their life of wealth and privilege in Mexico to go work in the labor camps of Southern California, where they must adapt to the harsh circumstances facing Mexican farm workers on the eve of the Great Depression.
<b>Sachar, Louis</b>	<b>Small Steps</b>	Three years after being released from Camp Green Lake, Armpit is trying hard to keep his life on track, but when his old pal X-Ray shows up with a tempting plan to make some easy money scalping concert tickets, Armpit reluctantly goes along.
<b>Schmidt, Gary D.</b>	<b>Wednesday Wars</b>	On Wednesday afternoons when all his classmates go to either Catechism or Hebrew school, seventh-grader Holling Hoodhood stays in Mrs. Baker's classroom where they read the plays of William Shakespeare and Holling learns much of value about the world he lives in.
<b>Scieszka, Jon</b>	<b>Guys Write for Guys Read</b>	A collection of short stories, drawings, poems, and memoirs from well-known writers of "guy" fiction, written by boys, for boys. Includes pieces by Daniel Pinkwater, Neil Gaiman, Will Hobbs, Stephen King, Gary Paulsen, among other.
<b>Siegel, Siena Cherson</b>	<b>To Dance: A Ballerina's Graphic Novel</b>	In graphic format, the author shares her story of how, after being diagnosed with flat feet, she decided to take ballet classes at the age of six and was accepted to the School of American Ballet when she was eleven.
<b>Soto, Gary</b>	<b>Taking Sides</b>	Fourteen-year-old Lincoln Mendoza, an aspiring basketball player, must come to terms with his divided loyalties when he moves from the Hispanic inner city to a white suburban neighborhood.
<b>Taylor, Mildred</b>	<b>The Land</b>	Paul-Edward, the son of a part-Indian, part-African slave mother and a White plantation owner father, finds himself caught between the two worlds of his parents as he pursues his dream of owning land in the aftermath of the Civil War.
<b>Wells, H. G.</b>	<b>The War of the Worlds</b>	An intellectually-superior race from Mars invades the Earth with plans to enslave human beings.

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<b>Wood, Don</b>	<b>Into the Volcano</b>	The author describes some of the world's most dangerous volcanoes and the work she does as a volcano researcher.
<b>Woodson, Jacqueline</b>	<b>Miracle's Boys</b>	Twelve-year-old Lafayette's close relationship with his older brother Charlie changes after Charlie is released from a detention home and blames Lafayette for the death of their mother.